

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 15 and 18 to 26 are pending in the application. Claim 15 is the only independent claim.

Support For Claim Amendments

Claim 15

Dependent claim 15 has been rewritten as independent claim 15 with the steel composition of prior claim 7 incorporated to define the composition of the cast slab of claim 15.

Claim 18

Claim 18 is based upon prior claim 8.

Claim 19

Claim 19 is based upon prior claim 9.

Claim 20

Claim 20 is based upon prior claim 16.

Claim 21

Claim 21 is based upon prior claim 17.

Claim 22

Claim 22 is based upon prior claim 1.

Claim 23

Claim 23 is based upon prior claim 2.

Claim 24

Claim 24 is based upon prior claim 3.

Claim 25

Claim 25 is based upon the last 3 lines of prior claim 7.

Claim 26

Claim 26 is based upon prior claim 11.

§103

Claims 1 to 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 03/031669 to Yokoi et al.

By the present amendment, claims 1 to 14 have been canceled. Therefore, the rejection of claims 1 to 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is now moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action advised at the bottom of page 3 that claims 15 to 17 were allowed.

Claim 15 was a dependent claim incorporating the steel composition of claim 7 as the composition of the cast slab of claim 15.

By the present amendment, dependent claim 15 has been rewritten as an independent claim incorporating the steel composition of claim 7 as the composition of the cast slab of claim 15.

It is therefore submitted that amended independent method claim 15 is patentable.

Since dependent claims 18 to 26 are all dependent from independent claim 15, it is submitted that dependent claims 18 to 26 are also patentable.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that in view of the present amendment and foregoing remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that the application, as amended, be allowed and passed for issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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